

THE SANITARY MOVEMENT AND ASSURANCE OFFICERS.—The *Athenaeum* suggests that now that every prudent man insures his life,—that the revenue of the societies is beginning to be counted by millions a year,—it may become worth the while of these bodies to assume some form of superintendence of the public health. The writer says we know not if this idea has as yet occurred to them; but they have begun to complain that the bad drains are destroying lives for which they have to pay. A case has just occurred, in which a good life and a thousand pounds were sacrificed to a defective sewer. The public health is here found to be an element in the success of a great commercial speculation,—and where the higher motive has failed to operate, the lower one may be advantageously let in. Might not the various insurance offices appoint a committee of inspection, empowered to look after the drains, heaps, and water-courses in the neighbourhood of their clients? Might it not be worth their while to contract with the parishes for due attention to everything which is necessary to the preservation of the public health in its highest state? They pay the medical man to detect disease for them,—might they not pay the scavenger to sweep it away? A few shillings would have cleansed the drain whose foulness cost one of the societies a thousand pounds. The loss to all the offices in London arising directly or indirectly from imperfect sanitary arrangements must be very great—perhaps greater in amount than would be the sum required to put the whole metropolis in good sanitary condition. We throw out this hint for the consideration of the insurance companies: their interests are precisely identical with those of the public.

THE SMOKE NUISANCE.—A petition has been presented to the House of Lords, by Lord Redesdale, from the corporation of the City of London, praying for the extension to the whole of the metropolis of the provisions contained in the London Sewers Act of 1851, for abolishing the nuisance of smoke from steam engines and furnaces. On presentation of the petition the Earl of Shaftesbury said that if any of their lordships would go to Whitechapel or Lambeth, they would see how the comforts and decencies of life were vitiated by this nuisance of smoke. It was injurious not only to the health, but to the pockets of the inhabitants to allow the smoke of manufactories to go unconsumed. He knew an instance where an intimate friend of his own—a large manufacturer—consumed his own smoke, and effected a saving thereby of 300*l.* a year. He believed, then, that the general adoption of the practice by manufacturers would benefit not only their health, but their pockets. The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

THE WELLINGTON STATUE AT EDINBURGH.—Though we have duly recorded the inauguration of this statue, we have said little as yet about its appearance or its merits. We should have liked to have had a look of it ourselves first; but in the meantime we gather a few details from the local papers, which are all quite enthusiastic in its praise, declaring it to be "admitted by the most critical judges that of all the monuments raised to Wellington, Steel's is the most worthy of the illustrious hero." The horse is in the act of rearing (a doubtful position), and is so balanced that the hind legs and flowing tail alone sustain the whole weight of horse and man, without any clumsy adjunct such as a tree stump sticking through the belly of the former. The Duke's figure is said to form a striking contrast, from its repose, to the free and bold action of the horse. The pedestal—from a design by Mr. Bryce—is of red Aberdeen granite. It is 13 feet in length, 6 in breadth, and 12½ feet high. The equestrian figure itself is about 13 feet in height, and has been secured on the plinth by strong bolts of copper. Its weight is 10 tons (12 tons of metal of the best quality having been melted down for it at an expense of 1,000*l.*). The colour of the bronze is bright, if not brilliant, and will remain so till darkened by the natural action of the atmosphere. The site selected for the statue at the front of the Register-office, is one of the finest and most public situations that could

have been selected in the city of Edinburgh, and was clearly designed by the architect, as we have before said, for an imposing group of statuary. The only question that required to be considered with reference to it probably was that of proportion, which we trust has been duly considered.

ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY OF ARCHDEACONRY OF NORTHAMPTON.—At a committee meeting, held on 14th ult. it was stated that the plans for St. Mary's, Stamford, which had been laid before the committee, are about to be carried out. Some members of the committee had been requested to meet Mr. Scott, at Geddington, respecting the restoration and re-seating of that church and chancel, which have been placed in his hands by the vicar and the Duke of Buccleuch. The committee resolved itself into a St. Sepulchre's committee, Lord Hanley in the chair. Mr. Badin and Mr. Hutton stated that, with former subscriptions, they had premises for 1,270*l.* Mr. Scott's more detailed and amended plans were produced and approved. The London committee for raising a memorial to the late Marquis of Northampton had declined to make the restoration of the round part, that memorial, preferring to erect an altar-tomb in the new part of the church, making either the aisle in which it stands, or portions of the chancel, as the pavement, stalls, or glass, memorial also. This would throw the repair or restoration of the round upon the local committee. It was probable that not less than 4,500*l.* would be required for the whole. The altered plans would give kneeling accommodation for about 900. The architect has proposed an apsidal east end, following in this the authority of Little Mispilestead.

CURVED LINES IN ARCHITECTURE.—Allow me to suggest, to those concerned in the erection of the Crystal Palace in its new location, attention to a fact I have observed in the construction of almost all large cathedrals, of both our own and foreign countries, I have been enabled to visit; viz. "that as well in the plans as the construction, what seem to be straight lines are, in fact, slight curves." In some cases this arrangement is so evident as to have suggested an idea that some parts of the substruction of the building have given way. This has been stated in respect to Lichfield cathedral, without, I believe, any foundation. The curve, so evident in the nave of that beautiful conception, seems to have been evidently designed on the part of the architect; and a slight curve, both in the plan and also in the horizontal lines, appears to add greatly to the effect. The plan of the cathedral at Lyons is slightly serpentine. Earlier cavillers would attribute these arrangements to defects of construction on the part of the builders, as though they were unable to produce straight lines, and were ignorant of the use of the plummet. In these days, however, a more humble spirit may teach us to discover excellences in what, in less enlightened periods, others have only fancied defects; and the perspective advantages produced by these curved lines, fully warrant the opinion that they should be regarded as evidences of high thought and genius in design, rather than of inability in execution. I have just risen from your review of Mr. Penrose's work on the Parthenon, and it seems to me that the ancients and the mediæval artists both worked on the same principles of curves, not straight lines. The Maison Carrée, at Nîmes, will fully bear out his views.—M. MITCHELL.

VALUE OF BUILDING LAND, WIMBLEDON.—Eighty lots of freehold building land, forming portions of the Wimbledon Park and West Hill Estates, Wimbledon and Wandsworth, were offered by auction on the 24th June, by Messrs. Chinnock and Galsworthy. The sale called together a large attendance, and a spirited competition was evinced. Nearly all the lots were sold at prices ranging between 350*l.* and 600*l.* per acre, being far beyond the prices hitherto realised for similar plots of land upon these estates. The lots varied from a quarter to four acres, and are chiefly adapted for villas. The total result of the sale was upwards of 19,900*l.* Wimbledon-park partakes much of the character of the Regent's-park.

PORTLAND BREAKWATER.—The staging now extends nearly half a mile in length from the shore. The piling is complete as far as the end of the first section of the breakwater, and a series of piles diverging from the direct line in the form of a crescent is being laid down to form the workmen's roadway from this to the second or main section, which will be proceeded with as rapidly as possible. While, however, the temporary road is being made by some classes of workmen and labourers, others find ample employment in preparing and depositing the stone for the first division of the breakwater, very many thousand tons being still required. The roadway alluded to will stand 25 feet above the level of the sea at low water, and the general depth of water at the ebb is about 57 feet, so that the piles supporting the roadway must be 80 feet high. They are made, like masts, of several pieces, and weigh each about 7 tons. The shoes, or spiral fittings, weigh upwards of 10 cwt. each. The piles are screwed down into the clay or shale by means of a capstan head and bars, with an endless rope attached to a crab, a system introduced by Messrs. Mitchell and Son, engineers, Belfast. The piles, as they are screwed down, are braced together by longitudinal and cross beams on the top, by chains running from the lower part of one to the top of its neighbour, and by similar chains running transversely from one to another at about low water mark, thus securely uniting the whole body. The piles are in rows, 30 feet apart; and on the top of them the necessary superstructure for carrying three lines of railway and a horse-track is fixed. Screw moorings are screwed down at regular intervals on each side of the staging for the purpose of steadying the piles. A screw is temporarily attached to one end of a large pile, from end to end of which is bored a hole, through which is passed the chain with one end permanently secured to the screw: the screw is then towed to the spot, and by powerful machinery on board a large barge, the pile is placed in an upright position, the screw end sinking to the bottom of the water. It is turned round a sufficient number of times for the screw to penetrate the ground to the depth of 5 or 6 feet: the temporary pile is then hauled up, the chain becoming drawn out from it, and on being released, the upper end is taken by other tackle, and conveyed to the pile to be moored, to which it is tightly strained and securely fixed. The quantity of stone deposited in the breakwater per day is about 1,200 tons, and we understand, from the local papers, that the quantity already so deposited amounts to about a million of tons.

LIMERICK SCHOOL OF DESIGN.—This new and much needed school of art was inaugurated on Wednesday week. The *Limerick Examiner*, in noticing the circumstance, says—"There is no portion of the empire—we may add there is no portion of the civilized world—labouring under such disadvantages as Limerick, in whatever relates either to example or instruction in the arts. We have neither the modern nor the antique schools of statuary. We have no picture gallery; and if there are some pictures which might instruct, they are all but inaccessible to the student. We have neither copy, nor example, nor model, of even the most ordinary architectural character, and the result, we regret to say, is perfectly apparent whenever we find it necessary to construct a new building, and commit to the hands of a home-instructed native. It is to training in the arts that Cork owes her present exhibition."

WARRINGTON MARKETS COMPETITION.—An architect informs us that five designs were sent in reply to advertisement, and that one of the competitors has been allowed, during three weeks' delay, free access to the other plans, and opportunity, through the good offices of some conscientious councillor, to submit a sixth plan, embodying the best points of each of the other five!

MUSEUM OF PRACTICAL GEOLOGY.—A course of lectures on gold has been commenced here with a view to the instruction of emigrants about to proceed to Australia. The first was given on the 30th by Mr. J. B. Jukes.